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Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly: Priority Theme: Addressing inequalities and challenges to social inclusion through fiscal, wage and social protection policies

Statement submitted by Society of Catholic Medical Missionaries, Casa Generalizia della Societa' del Sacro Cuore, Company of the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul, Congregation of the Mission, Dominican Leadership Conference, International Presentation Association, Partnership for Global Justice, Passionists International, Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary, School Sisters of Notre Dame, Sisters of Charity Federation, Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, Society of Catholic Medical Missionaries, UNANIMA International, non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.

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Please recycle

Statement

Financing Equality: Increasing Revenue for and Spending on Social Protection

The Sustainable Development Goals frame inequality as a multifaceted issue whose causes and effects are not only economic, but also social, environmental and political. They recognize that inequality manifests as disparities of opportunity, security, health, and influence as well as income level and material wealth. Within each goal is a tale of inequality between those who dream of its realization and those who have already tasted it.

The whole globe is plagued by the phenomenon of a growing class of hardworking poor alongside increasingly extreme wealth of ever fewer individuals. This phenomenon betrays a faulty economic growth model, which "creates" wealth yet exacerbates inequality.

Many governments continue to contribute to rising inequality by waiving taxes for the wealthiest individuals rather than for the bottom forty percent of the population. Two major consequences of this fiscal policy trend have been the dramatic decline in public wealth and the simultaneous and equally significant rise of private wealth exhibited in nearly every country on earth from 1980 to today (World Inequality Lab, 2018). In recent years, the governments of the US and UK, though two of the wealthiest nations on earth in terms of private wealth, have actually exhausted their public capital and gone into debt.

Wealth inequality is inevitable according to many economists but, as Professor Jan Tobochnik says, it is not just how the taxing is done but how the revenue is distributed that matters. For the last several decades, governments have been directing ever larger portions of their tax revenue toward military expenditures while squeezing budgetary allocations for the social protection of their most vulnerable. Greater proportions of public revenue must be allocated for social spending if social inequalities are to be diminished.

Taxation and increased social spending alone, however, will be insufficient to meet the social protection needs of the countries furthest behind. According to the Overseas Development Institute's 2018 Financing the End of Extreme Poverty report, 29 UN Member States would not have the revenue available to cover even 50% of their national social protection needs even if they restructure their taxation system to maximize tax revenue. States who are left with the greatest excesses of monetary wealth in the current global trade system must therefore be relied upon to invest more strategically and efficiently in these States with the greatest tax revenue-protection need deficits.

In these circumstances of widening disparities, we call for an era of wealth redistribution through policy reform in the areas of taxation, state social spending, and Official Development Assistance (ODA).

- Progressive taxation, which places a greater tax burden on corporations and the richest individuals than on the poorest in order to redistribute resources in society and ensure the funding of public services, is a key tool for governments that are committed to reducing inequality.
- Social spending on public services such as education, health and social protection has been shown to have a strong impact on reducing inequality, particularly for the poorest women and girls who are the most dependent on them.

➢ ODA is essential to fulfillment of social protection needs in many countries, but it can only fulfill this purpose if directed to states with the greatest demonstrated social protection need and designated for public service expenses.

Although there is a growing awareness of these global problems and their solutions, political will and action are lacking. Considering the urgency of the situation, better policies to reduce inequalities supported by budgetary allocations are critical. Governments must take steps to monitor progress in reducing inequality.

One noteworthy effort in inequality reduction policy is Scotland's "Fairer Scotland Duty" policy, which requires all public bodies to 'pay due regard' to how they can reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socioeconomic disadvantage. Health Scotland is responding to this legislation by implementing a "health inequality impact assessment" prior to making health policy changes.

In India, the Bihar Integrated Social Protection Strengthening Project is in the midst of implementing and scaling up several new social protection delivery systems to reach those who have been left out of previous systems, such as the elderly, disabled, remotely located, and the informally employed. It also hopes to establish a social protection tracking system, which would improve data collection on social service coverage and inform future budget and program designs in this sector.

In East Africa, two of the greatest social protection concerns on the horizon are the effects of climate change on their largely agrarian communities and the rapid urbanization that is already occurring as a result. Ethiopia and Tanzania have begun to respond to these challenges by implementing major public works programs which not only generate income for the region's booming working-age population but also support national efforts in the areas of climate change mitigation and adaptation, social services, student nutrition, and early childhood development. Though social protection schemes in East Africa have typically focused on alleviating rural poverty, nations in the region are currently looking to adapt and scale up social services for a growing population of urban poor. (OECD, 2017, Social Protection in East Africa: Harnessing the Future)

With these examples in mind, we urge Member States to address the root causes and most damaging effects of inequality by replacing the current fiscal policies favoring only the elites with policies that benefit the marginalized sections of the society.

We recommend the UN Member States to:

- Employing progressive taxation schemes that bolster public wealth by drawing from the increasingly excessive private wealth of individuals with the highest incomes and most assets
- Setting limits on individual contributions to political campaigns for elected leadership
- Creating a global tax body under the United Nations to close the loopholes and havens that allow for tax evasion and tax avoidances;
- Increasing investment in domestic social protection services so they can be diversified and adapted to the needs of those in formal and informal employment sectors and in urban and rural settings;
- Integrating biodiversity conservation and climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies with social protection schemes in recognition of the reinforcing relationship between such campaigns, especially in agrarian communities

- Implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (especially targets 10.3 and 10.4), Addis Ababa Action Agenda (especially para 41), and Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development (especially commitment 8.c on enlisting the support of the Bretton Woods Institutions in implementation of social development) by creating mechanisms for employment of historically disadvantaged groups (e.g. children, migrants, women, indigenous peoples, the disabled, and the elderly) in the design, implementation, and evaluation of programs aimed at their fulfillment
- Mainstreaming inequality impact assessments in evaluation processes for policies and programs throughout all areas under government purview (including taxation, budget development, trade, elections, and social protection) to ensure reduction of domestic and international disparities in income, food, water, health, and education is upheld as a cross-cutting priority
- Directing ODA to states with the greatest deficits between maximum potential tax revenue and social protection need and designating those funds for social protection spending

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Statement submitted by World Youth Alliance, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

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Please recycle

Statement

The World Youth Alliance is a global coalition of young people dedicated to promoting the dignity of the human person in policy and culture, and building solidarity between young people of developing and developed countries.

All human beings are equal in dignity and therefore deserve respect, opportunity, and the freedom to use their abilities and talents. Countries and communities may take different paths to reach the goal of social inclusion, but when people understand human dignity — the intrinsic and equal value of every human being — they strive to create conditions that include everyone and enable them to thrive. Therefore, human dignity must be at the foundation of our efforts.

This human dignity-centered approach is reflected in the well-established principle that development must be person-centered. It is the intrinsic worth of the human person that provides the basis on which to found policies and laws that create conditions under which human beings can flourish. Therefore, we should respect every human being and work together in solidarity to ensure that every human being is included in our efforts to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development.

Person-centered development is grounded in human dignity and focuses on empowering people. Policies based on human dignity recognize each person's ability to contribute to, not just benefit from, development. Human creativity and hard work have driven innovation, improving living conditions for countless people. Policies grounded in human dignity prioritize basic health care (SDG 3), education and vocational training (SDG 4), and good governance and infrastructure (SDG 16) that will give people access to various forms of capital that enable them to drive development. Policies that treat persons as part of a problem to be solved rather than participants in development ultimately detract from these essential efforts.

Each person has a right to the highest attainable standard of health. Health affects individuals' participation in the work and social spheres. Poor health can detract from the ability to receive an education and hurt one's ability to participate in the workforce and the life of the community. Ensuring that everyone has access to good healthcare should be part of social protection policies.

Good health requires not only medical care, but also clean water, sanitation, good nutrition, psychological well-being and the education necessary to comprehend medical advice and make informed decisions. Vulnerable groups such as persons with disabilities and conflict-affected populations are disproportionately affected by lack of access to healthcare and education. Therefore, they deserve responses that meet their needs and enable them to participate fully in the life of society.

Human dignity must be at the foundation of healthcare. People need to be able to understand their bodies and their options in order to exercise informed consent. They should not be denied healthcare based on considerations such as race, class, disability status, or age. And all treatments and services must respect the values and dignity of all human beings. World Youth Alliance encourages Member States not to impose as healthcare products and procedures that fail to respect patients' consciences, or which violate human dignity.

Quality education must be available to all on an equal basis and should flow from an authentic understanding of the human person, and foster respect for elf and others in solidarity. Parents bear the primary responsibility for educating their children and should be supported in this role by the state.

World Youth Alliance has developed a curriculum that can help promote respect, responsible behavior, and equality between men and women. The Human Dignity

Curriculum (HDC) teaches children about human dignity: that every human being has it and should therefore be respected. The program is culturally sensitive and encourages parental involvement.

Students who understand human dignity are not only prepared to make responsible personal decisions, but to contribute to their communities and to treat others with respect in their families, peer groups, and communities, including in their personal relationships. The lessons they learn about solidarity, excellence, and respect encourage them to examine their actions and responsibilities to themselves and others. With these lessons in mind, they can promote authentic development, inclusive policies, and fair workplace practices.

The HDC also has a sexuality education extension. This program teaches age-appropriate, biologically accurate information with a focus on personal development and informed decisions related to students' sexuality based on an understanding of themselves, and with respect for their own human dignity and the dignity of others. This can help girls and boys form healthy, respectful relationships and resist peer pressure.

Young people who understand human dignity are not only prepared to make responsible personal decisions, but to contribute to their communities and to treat others with respect in their families, peer groups, and communities, including in their personal relationships. They will be prepared to contribute to sustainable development and poverty eradication, not just for themselves, but also for others.

Having good health and sufficient education are key elements of social protection, but they are not the only things people need to thrive. Just fiscal and wage policies that take into account diverse perspectives and views, grounded in the dignity of the person and the fundamental equality of all human beings inherent in that dignity. These policies must be part of a larger effort to facilitate equal access to various forms of capital. By opening these forms of capital up to everyone, we can create new opportunities among diverse groups for innovation which can meet more and various needs, not only through social entrepreneurship but new business, research, and investment.

Michael Fairbanks, an advisor to President Paul Kagame of Rwanda, identified seven forms of capital that people need access to in order to thrive. These are: natural endowments such as location, subsoil assets, forests, beaches, and climate; the financial resources of a nation, such as savings and international reserves; humanly made capital, such as buildings, bridges, roads, and telecommunications assets; institutional capital, such as legal protections of tangible and intangible property, efficient government departments, and firms that maximize value to shareholders and compensate and train workers; knowledge resources, such as international patents, and university and think tank capacities; human capital, which represents skills, insights and capabilities; and culture capital, which means not only the explicit articulations of culture like music, language, and ritualistic tradition, but also attitudes and values that re linked to innovation.

Institutional capital aligns closely with Goal 16, and is critical to ensuring the access to the other forms of capital. In countries where corruption is widespread, the poor and those in vulnerable situations often cannot afford to exercise their rights. Those with inadequate or overbearing regulations make it impossible to start new enterprises, often leading to concentration of power and wealth. A lack of good infrastructure inhibits successful entrepreneurship. These issues will always have the most limiting effect on those at the margins.

However, countries that invest in just and accountable institutions and good infrastructure management can bring about lasting change. Eliminating bribery puts

more people on an equal footing. Regulatory schemes that are reasonable and intelligible to the ordinary person can protect resources from misuse while guaranteeing access to those resources by anyone with a good idea and the willingness to work for it. Creating systems that are just and accountable will increase their use by those most likely to be excluded. And it will give everyone a voice in developing the policies they want in place to ensure that everyone can be a participant in fostering development, including through fiscal and wage policies.

Human beings are our greatest resource. As the world of work continues to grow and change it is important to ensure that we include all people in all spheres of life. By grounding our efforts in human dignity and building person-centered policies, we can equip all human beings to be problem-solvers. Thus empowered, everyone can contribute to the development of their communities using their unique capacities and gifts.

World Youth Alliance urges the Commission to promote policies based on human dignity which ensure that all people have access to healthcare, quality education, and just and accountable institutions to ensure that they have access to the various forms of capital to promote inclusion and equality.

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Statement submitted by FEMM Foundation, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

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Please recycle

Statement

The FEMM Foundation is a knowledge-based health program for women inspired by women's right to be informed participants in their own healthcare and to make voluntary decisions based on options, information, and understanding. The Foundation is dedicated to health education, medical research, and improving reproductive health care to advance women's health. FEMM's work includes health education for women, medical training for doctors, and reproductive health research, which undergirds all of our work.

International law recognizes a right to the "highest attainable standard of health." The Sustainable Development Goals reflect this in their commitment to health in Goal 3. Good health empowers achievement in education and work; in contrast, poor health can lead to missing school, lost days at work, and lower income. By ensuring quality healthcare for all, we enable everyone's participation in the social and economic life of their communities. This participation closes gaps in equality and animates social inclusion, and makes good fiscal and wage policies more likely to reach as many as possible. For women and girls, who often face inequality and are not fully included, reproductive health (target 3.7) is a key part in this equation.

Women and girls comprise approximately half the population of the world but remain more vulnerable to health problems due to both biological and social reasons. Women and girls in rural areas often have access to fewer doctors and clinics, and may not have the financial ability to get the care they need. Health can help or hinder women and girls' education and participation in the social and economic life of their communities. By implementing good healthcare in rural communities for women and girls, we ensure that we do not leave half of humanity behind in poverty eradication and sustainable development policies.

Understanding one's own body is essential for good health and empowers women and girls to be informed participants in their care. Women also often accept as normal symptoms such as irregular bleeding, pain, depression, mood swings, and weight gain, nor realizing that these are often signs of underlying hormonal imbalances and abnormalities. Even when women do seek medical care, most health care providers and programs struggle to diagnose them and often can only treat the symptoms.

These underlying conditions can affect women and girls' long-term overall health, sometimes irreversibly. They can also affect women and girls' ability to complete their education, engage in work, and plan their families, and other aspects of their lives. Poor health hurts equality by undermining women and girls' ability to realize their potential and drive development in their communities. Women and girls who have untreated medical conditions can be empowered through both knowledge and good medical treatment.

A woman who understands how her body works can monitor her health and seek help when needed. Even women who have not completed schooling can learn to monitor their signs of health. Understanding women's bodies will also combat stigma and myths associated with normal biological processes such as menstruation that can keep women and girls from educational and career opportunities.

FEMM has developed an app to help women take control of their health. The FEMM App is available free of charge and is now available in English and Spanish on both iPhone and Android systems. Women who use the FEMM App can track their observations and symptoms to better understand their bodies and health. Just as each woman is different, so are her observations and experiences, which is why the App is completely customizable. Women can track as much or as little as they like and add symptoms and observations. It also provides insights into what a woman is

experiencing in her cycle, and can flag potential health concerns and connect women with medical professionals for treatment.

FEMM also enables women to make informed choices about family planning. There is a right to adequate family planning and information about reproductive and sexual health that is accurate and respects cultural, religious, and ethical beliefs. Programs focused on providing commodities often fail to ensure that women have the education needed to understand their bodies and what they are using, and may not always respect values.

Information-based health education and medical care is uniquely well suited to meet these needs while respecting individual choices and values. FEMM offers reproductive and hormonal education and helps women to understand the way various family planning methods work and their potential side effects. It educates women about the science of their bodies, how to identify when they are fertile, and how to achieve or avoid pregnancy. It also can demystify how women and girls' bodies work, combating stigma and promoting understanding and respect.

FEMM's researchers have rethought women's health. They have found that a woman's hormonal health is intrinsically linked with her overall health. They have developed better diagnostic criteria to identify conditions that are currently treated mainly at the symptomatic level and treat them at the roots. They are even discovering links with conditions not typically considered related to reproductive health. FEMM is rethinking the health of contemporary women in ways that will help them to take charge of their health and thrive in their communities.

Women and girls also need good healthcare to meet their needs when they do identify health concerns. FEMM's Medical Management program trains doctors to diagnose and treat reproductive health problems, with a holistic view of a woman's body that incorporates recent research on the complex hormonal interactions between different body systems. This interaction, and the delicacy of the hormonal activity in a woman's body, is essential to the experience of health in the entire female body. FEMM has developed innovative protocols that allow doctors to identify underlying problems with precision and treat them effectively. This medical support provides treatments that help women to live healthy lives.

FEMM is low-cost and meets the underlying needs of women. Comprehensive health care for women can now be provided through basic health delivery systems, making this approach to women's health more effective, cheaper to deliver, and providing stronger health outcomes for women. Even women who have not completed schooling can learn to monitor their signs of health. Understanding women's bodies will also combat stigma and myths associated with normal biological processes such as menstruation.

Women's full participation in society requires the investment in women's health and health education. Women's healthcare has often failed to meet women's needs. We know that informed decisions lead to healthier decisions, and that women play a key role in family and community health outcomes. Through FEMM's innovative programs, women will be empowered to take charge of their healthcare, and health systems will be able to meet their needs.

FEMM's programs are ready to be incorporated into the health aspects of social protection programs and FEMM is ready to assist in implementing them. The knowledge gained through FEMM can allow women to identify underlying health concerns and to achieve or avoid pregnancy. When people attain the highest level of health they can, they are able to thrive and partake in their communities, ensuring social inclusion and equality for women and girls. FEMM is prepared to assist the Commission and Member States to meet this goal.

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Statement submitted by Society to Support Children Suffering from Cancer (MAHAK), a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.

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Please recycle

Statement

27 years ago, MAHAK- the Society to Support Children Suffering from Cancer, was established with the aim of supporting the families of cancer-stricken children who need special care throughout the hard days of treatment. In this regard, different measures were taken, such as establishing a residential center for the families who came to the capital city for the treatment of their child.

By the passage of the time and the expansion of MAHAK's vision and, as a result of multiplication of the needs of the families, it was decided, in 2007, to establish a specialized hospital to provide comprehensive treatment and supportive services to cancer-stricken children regardless of gender, color and ethnicity.

From then onward, the best and updated measures have been taken for providing all-purpose diagnostic, treatment and supportive services to children with cancer and their families. Some of these activities include launching joint projects with experts and specialists in the field of cancer treatment with the aim of sharing and benefiting from knowledge and experiences.

MAHAK has had precise plannings to accomplish its mission and has utilized all its capacities in line with the realization of its vision. However, providing treatment is a long and difficult process in low and middle-income countries, where health care systems are facing great challenges to improve cancer care, control costs, and increase systems efficiency. The disparity in access to care and outcomes between high-income countries and low- and middle-income countries is staggering. The reasons for this disparity include cost, access to care, manpower and training deficiencies, and a lack of awareness in the lay and medical communities. Diagnosis and treatment play an important role in this complex environment.

MAHAK as a charity organization operating in a middle-income country with all the expenses being covered by public donations; is also facing different challenges. Considering the need to scale up cancer care in the low- and middle-income countries, these challenges can be managed via proper planning while some others, which are caused by external factors, are not manageable by any one organization alone.

One of the external factors is the imposed embargos which have hindered some of the vital processes for accomplishing the mission of MAHAK, a charity organization which is striving to support innocent cancer-stricken children and their families in a comprehensive manner.

Currently, debilitating sanctions have been unilaterally imposed on Iran as a result of which fund transfer from other countries has become effectively impossible and therefore have led to the scarcity and related price hikes of crucial drugs in the country and have put the lives of all patients with severe sicknesses especially cancer-stricken children in hazard. As an NGO which has received the top score by Société Generale de Surveillance (SGS) global NGO Benchmark practice with the score of 97.5% in September 2018 from among all the organizations which have valid certificates and as an organization which is responsible for health and serenity of more than 17000 under treatment cases, we would like to share our deep concern that the sanctions imposed on Iran have made it extremely difficult to procure required medications, for children with cancer, as the expenses have doubled.

To address the above-mentioned issue, we have communicated this dire predicament to international organizations working in human services and closely related fields which can resolve this issue. We believe that solving such issues will not be possible unless humanity strives for them and policy-making organizations plan for their eradication, disregarding the borders with the aim of promoting the idea of giving borderless love to all the people in universe.

As many countries are working hard to establish a payment mechanism that would curtail the impact of these sanctions, international organizations can undertake a similar emergency measure to address the resulting public health problems that will ensue.

In the same regard the famous Iranian13-th century poet has said:

Human beings are members of a whole

In creation of one essence and soul

If one member is afflicted with pain

Other members uneasy will remain

If you have no sympathy for human pain

The name of human you cannot retain

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Statement submitted by VIVAT International, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

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Please recycle

Statement

Statement submitted by VIVAT International, a Non-Governmental Organization in Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations working in 127 countries in the world.

Introduction

Since the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals by 193 countries of the United Nations General Assembly on September 25th, 2015, efforts have been made by all stakeholders to implement and make this development agenda come true for all people and the planet. The motto "Leave no one behind" seems to be powerful enough to push everyone forward. A lot of progress has been made during these past three years, as reported and shared through voluntary national reviews (VNRs) at High Level Political Forum sessions since 2016. The UN Report of 2018 also gives us the hope that, by 2030, this Agenda will work in every country and region (See: https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2018).

However, gaps remain and many are still being left behind. People in rural and suburban slum areas, people with HIV/AIDS, persons with disabilities and persons with mental health problems are the most vulnerable ones to be uncounted in the development process.

Inequalities and Challenges

People in rural and suburban slum areas tend to be ignored and neglected in government programs and have less access to public services such as health care, free basic education, electricity and public transportation, safe drinking water and sanitation. Many people in rural areas are also excluded from government statistics which results in being excluded from access to social benefits. In some countries, multinational corporations and governments have grabbed the lands and territories of the people in rural areas for mining, plantations, or electric dams, without any compensation; this situation has resulted in the increase in poverty, unemployment and food insecurity. Finally, children of poor families in rural and suburban slums areas are often vulnerable by being victims of cheap labor, human trafficking and sexual exploitation, and violence.

Persons with disabilities, persons with HIV/AIDS and persons with mental health disabilities are among those most maltreated in society. They are face obstacles to education, health care, access to public services, and social protection. These peoples' voices also tend to be ignored; their participation and contribution in political, economic and socio-cultural affairs and development process are not recognized in many societies. In some societies, such persons are labeled and stigmatized as a burden for their families and society as a whole. It is often found that persons with disabilities are underpaid and discriminated against from access to certain jobs and prestigious positions in their work places which then results in extreme poverty and vulnerability among these people and a potential violation of their basic human rights (https://workspirited.com/discrimination-against-disabled-people-in-workplace).

VIVAT International's Efforts and Commitment

In response to the situation previously described and in relation to people in rural and suburban slum areas, VIVAT International has taken some initiatives to ensure food security by providing and distributing food for the poor in suburban and rural areas. In Kayole, suburban Nairobi, for example, a "food for the poor" program has been developed to feed the poor from 6 to 98 years old living in slums – Soweto,

Matopeni, Spring Valley and Gatwikira — most of whom are street children and elderly. They also receive medical services (See Anthony Amissah, "The Power of Food", VIVAT Newsletter, 75th, April–June, 2018:4-5).

Similarly, the Divine Word Missionaries which is a founding Congregation of VIVAT International has developed the "Arnold Project" for vulnerable people in rural and suburban areas of Ecuador. This project operates in three parishes outside Guayaquil City: St. Arnold Janssen in Mount Sinai, Our Lady of the Rocks, and St. Brother Michael in Guasmo. The aim of this project is to assist families and children in risky and violent situations. More than 270,000 inhabitants live in this vast area. Seventy-five percent of this population lives in abject poverty. They migrated from Chimborazo, Azuay and Manabi provinces and live in small houses made of wood and reeds and built on the extensions of land acquired from land traffickers. It is common to find more than one family living in one house or many single mothers with their children. Unemployment is rampant. The project also provides food and free counseling for these people (John Cudjoe, SVD, "The Arnold Project: Hope for the Vulnerable in Guayaquil, Ecuador", in Divine Word Missionaries Magazine, Winter 2017:10-12).

In Nong Bhua Lampu, Northeast Thailand, VIVAT International members run a Rehabilitation Center called "Mother of Perpetual Help Center" for HIV/AIDS patients. Established 16 years ago, this center tries to give hope to patients who are mostly neglected and rejected by their families. At the Mother of Perpetual Help Center patients receive intensive medical care as well as HIV/AIDS education program ("HIV/AIDS Challenge 2018 Thailand" in Divine Word Missionaries, Summer 2018: 6 - 11). Similarly, in Vitoria City, Brazil, VIVAT International (Divine Word Missionaries) founded a center called Villa de Nazare (House of Nazareth) in 1993 for HIV/AIDS patients, especially for children and teenagers. These children receive medical treatment as well as education program (Markus Fraedrich, "Villa de Nazare: HIV/AIDS Challenge 2018 Brazil," in Divine Word Missionaries, Summer 2018:12–16).

In both countries, poverty and lack of education are two of the root causes of HIV/AIDS. Therefore, education and eradication of poverty have been part of VIVAT International's effort and commitment to free these people from being marginalized, excluded and discriminated against.

Sustainable Development Goals and Social Protection

The Sustainable Development Goals, adopted by the United Nations in 2015, are a 15 year development agenda by all and for all. In relation to eradication of poverty, Goal 1, target 1.3, calls for governments to implement nationally and locally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors. It also calls for the achievement of a substantial coverage of the poor both in rural, suburban, and rural areas and the vulnerable, including the persons with disabilities, persons with HIV/AIDS, migrant workers and persons with mental health problems.

Meanwhile, Goal number 1, target 1.4, calls for the governments to ensure that all people, especially the poor and the vulnerable, have access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, natural resources and inheritance.

All of these are based on the 6 essential elements: dignity, people, prosperity, our planet, justice, and partnership.

Recommendations:

Based on those realities, challenges and expectations, VIVAT International calls upon Member States to:

1. Provide fiscal policies that include the fulfillment and the protection of the rights of the suburban and rural people to food, education, health ca.e, electricity, water and sanitation, and public transportation/infrastructure.

2. Provide fiscal policies for the medical care and health education of persons with HIV/AIDS;

3. Provide fiscal policies that guarantee the rights of persons with disabilities and persons with mental health problems to have access to facilities and public services.

4. Establish national minimum wage policies that ensure the fulfillment of the basic needs (housing, food, clothing, education, health and recreation) of rural and suburban people.

5. Ensure and enact laws and policies that protect and respect persons with disabilities from discrimination, abuse and exploitation.

6. Create more job opportunities for the persons with disabilities.

7. Provide insurance policies that include the suburban, rural, migrant workers, persons with disabilities, persons with HIV/AIDS, and persons with mental health problems.

Conclusion

The dignity of all, including the poor in suburban and rural areas, migrant workers, persons with disabilities, persons with HIV/AIDS, persons with mental health disabilities, can be achieved and fulfilled if all stakeholders commit themselves to implementing the Sustainable Development Goals for the benefit of all. With its motto, "Together for Life, Dignity and Human Rights," VIVAT International, along with the United Nations and in collaboration and partnership with multi-stake holders, continues to put the last first, to bring the marginalized at the center of its work and to become the voice of the voiceless both at national and global levels.

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Statement submitted by Fundacja Instytut na rzecz Kultury Prawnej Ordo Iuris, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.

18-18929 (E) 131118

Please recycle

Statement

Inequalities in family policy

Support of parents in the care for a child under 3 years old is an essential part of family policy. However, adopted solutior differ in the level of effectiveness and parents' assessments. Inequalities and exclusions associated with the child care system result from a lack of respect for an autonomy of the family and its decisions. Meanwhile, this key component of family policy is of great importance and, in the long term, it can significantly determine the demographic and economic potential of the state.

The modern solution of child care for children up to 3 years old, implemented by some countries, is based on the assumption of two models:

- Etatistic Model — under this model, the state uses of public funds to support only one child care that is preferred by the authorities, mostly the institutional care provided in nurseries. The possibility of creating child care institutions is strictly regulated by the state. The etatistic model also involves the creation of mandatory paternity quotas as part of parental leave, which means that parents have a limited opportunity to dispose of paternal leave.
- Subsidiary Model — is based on respect for the autonomy of the family and leaves parents, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity, to decide upon the form of care for small children that should be supported by the public authorities. Legislation under the subsidiary model leaves a significant margin of discretion in the creation of child care institutions and provides a wide range of their forms.

Solutions implementing significant elements of the Subsidiary Model are carried out in countries where the overall fertility rate is among the highest in Europe, including Finland and France. In a number of countries, its introduction coincided with the beginning of an upward trend in the overall fertility rate. The Etatistic Model is implemented primarily in the countries of former Soviet Union and the Eastern former bloc and is largely the relic of the legislation and social policy of the socialist era. Its elements are present in some countries of western Europe, including Germany. There are no examples of countries, in the analysed European countries (the Czech Republic, Great Britain, France, Finland, Estonia, Hungary, Slovakia, Lithuania, Russia, Germany, Italy) in which unilateral increases in investment in nursery care has coincided with the increase in the total fertility rate.

Subsidiary Model

The Subsidiary Model is implemented in three basic formulas: (a) care voucher, (b) long parental leave, (c) tax reliefs related to child care in the field of income taxes. Relatively long parental leave is granted to parents in the Czech Republic, Lithuania, Russia and Hungary. Care voucher in different variants, parents may have in Finland in France. Tax relief related to child care are still rare — to a varying extend, it is envisaged by the Great Britain and some states in the United States. These instruments, in principle, exist in parallel with the mechanisms of family policy, which are addressed to all families with minor children.

Care Voucher

In place of the planned significant increase in state budget expenditures on the development of day-care nurseries, effective solutions should be introduced that provide parents free choice of child care. Such a solution may be e.g. the introduction of a nationwide care voucher from birth of a second and third child, which ensures

respect for the different forms of child care and will allow parents to choose between institutional collective care, home care and other forms of child care. The introduction of care vouchers can also be convenient for parents, whose children cannot benefit from institutional collective care, in particular for the residents of rural areas, where the opportunities for institutional care network development are very limited. The care voucher will allow the implementation of diverse needs related to child care that various groups of parents have. The introduction of the voucher can also bring savings due to administrative costs that are much lower than in the case of public institutional care.

Tax relief

An alternative or additional support to care voucher could be a tax relief in area of personal income tax for parents of all children under 3 years old or parents of those children who do not benefit from state-funded institutional care. In the case of simultaneous functioning of both instruments, the amount of such a relief may be correlated with the value of care voucher, which would be then correspondingly lower.

Parental leave

An alternative or supporting solution to care voucher could be the extension of paid parental leave. Longer parental leave could be introduced gradually. The opportunity for parents of young children to extend leave for additional year in the event of the birth of the second or subsequent offspring within 48 months, could be an incentive to accept the next child.

Flexible forms of paid work

Expanding the offer of forms of child care should be an important element of state policy, but it must be supported by a number of other activities. To this end, states should act to popularize flexible forms of paid employment, because they allow reconciliation of private and family life. One of possible solutions in this regard is the introduction of a statutory guarantee enabling parents to take up work with the present employer in a flexible or part-time form.

Public opinion polls

In those countries where public opinion polls have been conducted on the assessment of different family policy models in the child care system for children under 3 years old, dominate assessments that the public authorities should ensure different forms of child care, including home care. In Poland, for example, as many as 60,95% of respondents said that parents should have an influence on what form of care public money will be allocated to. In Hungary, a vast majority of parents are in favour of the care performed directly by parents, and 56% of parents are using the help of grandparents in child care. In the Czech Republic 38% of respondents indicated that they count on the public child care and at the same time 58% of respondents stated that the child in the preschool age should be looked after mainly by family members. Models based on the one-side funding of nurseries does not, in principle, find support of respondents.

Conclusions

Public authorities should to a greater extend respect and protect the autonomy of the family and its needs. For this purpose, it is recommended to change the method of spending funds previously allocated to collective care (mainly nurseries), so that they can support other forms of child care, including home care exercised by parents, grandparents, family members, or nannies. It is the best interest of a child and parents' needs that should determine how money will be spent in a particular case of child care.

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Statement submitted by European Youth Forum, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.

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Please recycle

Statement

In the European context, inequality across generations has shown a marked increase and, according to research published by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in 2018, it is young people who are suffering the most. The 2008 economic crisis and subsequent austerity policies have had significant impact on youth. In recent years, young people have become the population group at most risk of poverty and social exclusion in the European Union.

Many young people in Europe are denied access to their economic and social rights, facing discrimination in securing quality jobs or accessing fair, just and adequate social security systems. To address inequalities and challenges to social inclusion, policies must work towards an economy and a society that support young people, and the rights violations that young people face must be addressed.

The European Youth Forum, a platform of 104 youth organizations in Europe, which represents the interests and promotes the rights of young people in Europe, believes that the following policy interventions are required:

Ensure fiscal policies support social inclusion

Austerity measures over the past decade have had a significant impact on young people in Europe, with spending on employment, education, health, and social protection decreasing as a result of these measures. Cuts to public spending on education have negatively affected young people's access to quality education, with significant consequences for young people from vulnerable and marginalized groups. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), in the direct aftermath of the economic crisis, countries that experienced strongest fiscal tightening also experienced the highest increases in youth unemployment. Responses to the crisis led to a decline in employment protection, including cuts in minimum wages and unemployment benefits, particularly for young people. Fiscal consolidation programmes since the crisis have therefore had a direct and disproportionate impact on Europe's youth, affecting their inclusion in society.

Social policies must be viewed as an investment in a more equal and inclusive society. Policy makers must therefore ensure that fiscal policies prioritise social investment, putting an end to austerity measures and their negative consequences for youth.

Abolish youth minimum wage policies

Several European States have youth minimum wage policies in place. These are often well below the national minimum wage standard. These differing minimum wage policies perpetuate age-based discrimination and conflict with the right to equal remuneration for work of equal value. This perpetuates a cycle of income poverty and inequality and the intergenerational gap between young people and other groups of working age. According to Eurostat data, in 2016, young people aged 16–24 faced an in-work at-risk-of-poverty rate of 12.2%. This rate was 9.7% for employed persons aged 25–64. Lack of or insufficient remuneration also affects young people's social rights. Living independently has become a luxury that many young people simply cannot afford.

Policy makers should end age-based discrimination in wage policies and ensure equal remuneration for equal work. National minimum wage policies that apply to all workers, regardless of age, must be established.

Ban unpaid internships

Young people face high levels of vulnerability and unequal access to the labour market. In the European context, entry-level jobs are diminishing and fewer employers are willing to take on and invest in the development of young workers. As a result, internships and apprenticeships have become necessary pathways to employment. While internships should be able to offer young people learning experiences and support their further employability, too often the positions available are unpaid. Young people are being used as cheap labour, carrying out work that could or should be done by paid employees. This violates their right to fair wages and to just and favourable conditions of work that ensure a decent living. Unpaid internships also serve to deepen inequalities as not all young people can access them equally. The provision of fair and appropriate remuneration is necessary to enhance equal access to the labour market and ensure that all young people, regardless of their socioeconomic background, can take up internship opportunities.

Policy makers should adopt and implement legislation to better regulate internships, according to the principles of the European Youth Forum's European Quality Charter on Internships and Apprenticeships. For internships to be of quality, they must cover the following three aspects: learning content, social and labour rights, and remuneration.

Improve access to social protection

In the European context, young people can face age-based discrimination in accessing social protection. According to a 2015 study by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), in certain European countries young people cannot receive income support before the age of 24 or 25. Additionally, due to their contributory nature, unemployment benefits tend to be inaccessible for young people looking for their first job or who have only completed short-term contracts. Given that young people are in a more vulnerable position in the labour market and face difficulties in accessing quality, stable and long-term employment, this leaves them unable to access their right to social security. In addition, as also recognised by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs Report on the World Social Situation 2018, difficulties in accessing this type of employment leave young people unable or less able to participate in contributory statutory pension systems, leaving the current generation of young people at risk of poverty later in life.

Young people are increasingly and disproportionately caught up in precarious and non-standard forms of employment, such as zero-hour contracts, undeclared work, temporary work and work in the platform economy. According to Eurostat data, in 2016, 43.8% of employees aged 15–24 in the European Union had temporary contracts, as compared with 12.1% of the rest of the working-age population. New and non-standard forms of employment do not always provide the necessary accumulation of work hours or income required by the state to allow access to social security. This contributes to increasing the risk of poverty and social exclusion for young people.

Policy makers must reform social protection policies to end age-based discrimination and ensure adequate coverage for all in the context of the changing realities of the labour market and the changing nature of work. Addressing existing gaps and discrimination in access to social protection is all the more important in light of the further challenges that the future of work will bring in this regard.

Conclusion

Failure to address inequalities and social exclusion harms economic outcomes and is detrimental to social harmony and well-being. Conversely, building a society that works for young people creates a stronger foundation for all. Fiscal, wage and social protection policies must be inclusive of youth and respond to their realities. For this to happen, the discrimination and barriers that young people face in accessing their economic and social rights must be urgently addressed.

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Statement submitted by Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.

18-18931 (E) 141118

Please recycle

Statement

Rising inequality is a major obstacle to the achievement of social inclusion and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd welcomes the priority theme, "Addressing inequalities and challenges to social inclusion through fiscal, wage and social protection policies." In our experience, as an organization working at the grassroots level, social protection policies and policies that ensure a living wage for all workers are fundamental to reducing poverty, achieving gender equality, and promoting decent work and social inclusion. It is clear that growing economies have not benefited people equitably, with multidimensional and multigenerational poverty persisting, leading to further vulnerability and social exclusion.

The theme of the Commission for Social Development appears to neglect the globalized reality within which fiscal, wage and social protection policies are enacted. Current neoliberal economic policies prioritize corporations and profit over people and human rights. Tax injustice, illicit financial flows, the privatization of public services, land grabbing, extractive industries, agribusiness, and the implementation of austerity measures are examples of practices that require a paradigm shift to a more equitable distribution of resources through living wage legislation, progressive taxation and investment in social protection systems and measures for all, including floors. These redistributive fiscal policies are possible and vital to ensure just and inclusive economic growth for all.

Current fiscal policies, skewed to increasingly benefit fewer people, are a major contributor to inequality within and among countries. Tax abuse results in the loss of public revenue, resulting in insufficient and low-quality social protection, including education, health, and care services. This perpetuates gender inequalities and limits women's and girls' economic empowerment. To achieve the SDGs, States must focus on tax justice in order to both raise more resources for public goods and services and redistribute currently available resources more fairly. States must also work on ending tax abuse, which has a negative impact on people's lives, and on social inclusion and economic development. Through effective and progressive tax systems, based on fairness and ability to pay, governments can create the enabling environment for public and private investment, and mobilize sustainable and predictable sources of funding necessary to implement social protection systems and realize SDG 10, reducing inequality within and among countries.

Erosion of labor rights and neglect of the decent work agenda has led to social exclusion and exploitation. Wage share of national income has been steadily declining for decades in many countries, leading to more working people living in poverty. Neoliberal policies, public spending cuts, and austerity measures in developing and developed countries alike have had a negative impact on low-income workers, especially women and girls. The current economic system is for the most part sustained by gender inequality and discrimination against women in the labor force. Mainstream economic thinking does not take into account the value of unpaid care work and its contribution to the economy. Unpaid care work often compensates for austerity measures. The disproportionate burden of unpaid care work on girls and women constitute an important barrier to their gaining access to the right to work. A human rights approach to economic issues should endeavor to address asymmetric power relations that underpin gender inequality,

There has also been an unprecedented rise in the share of work that is informal, precarious and exploitative, in which women and girls are overrepresented. Respect for human and labor rights, including freedom of association and collective bargaining, has declined with negative consequences for the realization of SDG 8, the

creation of resilient and prosperous economies, and the development of more inclusive and equal societies. Social justice demands implementation and enforcement of minimum wages that allow people to live with dignity, taking into account cost of living and inflation. This also includes concrete policies to enhance workers' occupational health and safety, reasonable working hours, job security, legal protection, and social protection, in line with international labor standards.

To reduce inequalities, Governments agreed to implement nationally defined social protection floors in line with International Labour Organization Recommendation 202, where they recognized 'that social security is an important tool to prevent and reduce poverty, inequality, social exclusion, and social insecurity, to promote equal opportunity and gender and racial equality, and to support the transition from informal to formal employment.' While Governments committed to providing these floors, currently four billion people in the world live without any form of social protection and only 29 percent of the world's population receives comprehensive social protection.

This gap has led organizations, such as Good Shepherd, to step in when the Government is unable or unwilling to provide sufficient services. The Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd prioritizes the empowerment and financial inclusion of vulnerable girls and women, who experience multidimensional poverty and the systemic violations of their dignity when implementing projects. These projects also serve as models and good practices for the implementation of social protection policies across a wide variety of need, ranging from basic services of water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) in Nepal to meeting the need for financial inclusion in Australia.

In Nepal, Good Shepherd has a range of programs working with girls, women, and youth, none of whom receive any sort of social protection or cash transfer from the government. In the residential long-term and short-term facility in Pokhara, girls aged 4 to 18 receive basic services, attend educational facilities nearby, and partake in vocational and life skills training. Most recently, Good Shepherd Nepal is working towards the creation of a WASH program in the most remote parts of the Gorkha district. This project, once finished at the end of the year, will benefit 3,500 people in these communities. Girls and women are disproportionately affected by the WASH needs of their households, often leading to limited education and decent work opportunities. Access to WASH services allows community members to live healthier lives and girls and women the ability to get an education and work outside the home.

Three million people in Australia are excluded from mainstream financial institutions and their banking and insurance products. This places them and their families at risk of poverty and poor social, emotional and health outcomes. Good Shepherd Microfinance offers moderate to low-income individuals in Australia the ability to be included in their own financial future through loan and financial advisory programs. In partnership with the National Australia Bank, Good Shepherd Microfinance provides loans that allow those excluded financially, disproportionality women and other marginalized groups, a chance to put money towards household goods, educational opportunities and incidentals that they would otherwise be without. Another program partners with insurance institutions to create tailored and affordable general insurance plans, enabling people to enjoy social protection.

Good Shepherd Microfinance has become a key partner in Australia's move towards financial inclusion. The Australian Government appointed Good Shepherd Microfinance to create a Financial Inclusion Action Plan (FIAP). This plan brings organizations, academia, financial institutions, and private business together to come up with practical actions that these groups can use to improve the financial resilience

of employees, customers, and communities. (http://goodshepherdmicrofinance.org.au/services/financial-inclusion-action-plans-fiap/)

The current global economic system that impinges on people's dignity, erodes human rights and socially excludes demands redress. Inequalities can be addressed through developing alternative financial architectures that implement fiscal, wage and social protection policies that are redistributive, gender just and inclusive.

Recommendations.

Implement national social protection floors, in line with ILO Recommendation 202 and SDG 1.3, while scaling up existing social protection policies towards universal social protection.

Realize SDG 8 by protecting and promoting human and labor rights, decent work, and living wages so that people can work and live in dignity and prosperity.

Achieve SDG 10 by empowering and promoting the social, economic and political inclusion of all, and by creating inclusive fiscal, wage and social protection policies that create resilience and economic opportunity among vulnerable communities.

Implement progressive tax systems and end impunity for tax abuse to mobilize resources for social protection floors and other public services.

Invest in financially inclusive loan programs, microfinance loans, and small business cooperatives that empower socially excluded people to reclaim their dignity and become active participants in their financial decisions.

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Statement submitted by Soroptimist International, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.

18-18932 (E) 121118

Please recycle

Statement

Social protection and human rights issues have enjoyed a powerful, sustainable and collaborative relationship and been regarded as priorities since 1948, when the right to social security was included in Article 25(1) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. At that time, it was acknowledged that everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for their health and well-being, including human rights such as food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control. In addition, under social protection programs, women are the beneficiaries of social security including social insurance and public and private pension schemes.

Despite significant progress in the extension of social protection in many parts of the world, the right to social security is not yet a reality for a majority of the world's population. Only 45 per cent of the global population are effectively covered by at least one social protection benefit, while the remaining 55 per cent — as many as 4 billion people — are left unprotected. ILO estimates also show that only 29 per cent of the global population are covered by comprehensive social security systems that include the full range of benefits, from child and family benefits to old-age pensions. Yet the large majority — 71 per cent, or 5.2 billion people — are not, or are only partially, protected.

Soroptimist International sees social protection as a key strategy for eradicating poverty to achieve sustainable development for all. Nationally appropriate Social Protection policies and programs including social protection floors have been recognized as playing an important part in addressing the poverty and vulnerability of women, children, older persons, indigenous peoples and persons with disabilities. Social protection policies have great potential in facilitating the rights to education, social security, health, food, shelter, and water, in accordance with the obligations of States under international human rights law. When used as a floor and not a ceiling, social protection floors can contribute significantly to gender equality and the realization of minimum essential levels of those rights especially for marginalized groups.

We believe that quality education accessible beyond primary stages, can be regarded as one of the major pillars of social protection, offering women and girls the opportunity to fulfil their potential, engage in social entrepreneurship or find meaningful employment. Along with the provision of supportive health systems, adequate housing to meet family needs and the safety net of social security financial provisions across the life span, mean that women and girls especially, can be lifted above the poverty level and provided with a self-sustaining future.

Soroptimist International advocates the following to lift women and girls from poverty:

- accessible free quality education at all levels for all women and girls as a platform of support to enable them to move out of poverty whilst contributing to economic development locally and nationally;
- the empowerment of women and girls through recognized employment that provides a minimum living wage with the provision of accessible financial support and training enabling those who wish to develop skills of entrepreneurship;
- provision of full, quality health care, especially maternal health and child care, supported by appropriate education and information on sexual and reproductive health rights;

- provision of social protection systems and floors for the most vulnerable, especially those with disabilities and long-term illnesses and older persons;
- ensure through social protection policies safe shelter and food security for women and girls in vulnerable situations;
- Safe access to water and sanitation for homes, schools and workplaces with the involvement of women in community management of these facilities, ensuring that the time resource recovered for women and girls is available for positive action enabling development;
- Improved levels of disaggregated data collection which provide information that enables positive measures to be targeted for those most in need.

We Urge:

Governments to create sound policy frameworks at the national, regional, and international levels to provide universal, human rights based social protection for all. Goal 1 of the 2030 Agenda for Social Development to end poverty in all its forms everywhere, calls for the implementation of nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, as well as the achievement of substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable by 2030.

Governments to recognize and implement existing agreements. To be protected is not a privilege, but a right as stated in Article 22 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This right was reaffirmed by the Social Protection Floors Recommendation unanimously adopted by 184 members of the International Labour Conference in 2012.

Social protection is an investment in people and thus in long-term social and economic development. Nationally appropriate social protection systems and floors make a critical contribution to meeting the Sustainable Development Goals aimed at poverty eradication and exerting a positive impact on economic growth, social cohesion and social development.

Member States for decades have been entering into agreements and adopting resolutions which provide for many forms of social protection for women and girls. However, for many women and girls personal and family safety, access to education, economic security, food security, safe shelter and a healthy life are a long way from being achieved. It is no longer acceptable that action has not been taken or is implemented slowly. In order to achieve the goals of the 2030 Agenda, Governments must immediately act on the promises given so that no one is left behind.

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Statement submitted by Universal Peace Federation, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

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* The present statement is issued without formal editing.

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Please recycle

Statement

Education is the pathway for children's future social inclusion: it enables them to access the opportunities necessary to overcome challenges and inequalities. What efforts can be undertaken to ensure that children receive an education and have academic success? There are clearly many. For example, schools must be accessible and poverty, poor health, and hunger must be eradicated. One natural social protection that contributes to the amelioration of these challenges and increases children's educational success is the family or, more precisely, parents. No government, NGO, or social agency can have an influence on children's inclusion into the world of learning and education that a caring mother or father does.

It is parents that make sure their children have the necessary school uniform or books and make sure they get to school and do so safely. It is parents that instil in their young child the love of reading and encourage their school-age children to invest in schoolwork and develop the self-discipline necessary to do so. Research shows that children of involved parents have higher scores on reading and math tests. Many documents such as from the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo +5, state that the role of parents and the family should be recognized and promoted as central in educating their children and instilling in them virtues and positive attitudes. Furthermore, parents have not only a role but also responsibilities, rights, and duties to raise, educate, and guide their children. These parental responsibilities and rights should be recognized, respected and supported.

Early childhood development and the role of parents are fundamental. Research indicates that a secure attachment or responsive bonding between parents and young children affects the wiring of the brain and increases the child's capacities to learn. The importance of parents caring for and nurturing their children from the earliest stage to adolescence was emphasized in Children Summit, 20-5. The optimal "window of opportunity" for child development takes place before age five and the "window" is never again as open as a child matures.

Human beings are relational. The quality of parent-child relationship shapes a child's relational abilities for the rest of his or her life. A wealth of research confirms that children raised in a stable family are at a lesser risk on all levels of well-being compared to children experiencing family instability. Family stability generates measurable benefits to children's physical, psychological, social, spiritual and cognitive development as stated in Children Summit, +10, 37-10. When parents' capacities are strengthened with support and services, healthy early childhood development will be fostered.

In conclusion. Universal Peace Federation would like to encourage the scrutiny of policies, programs, and approaches that affect the responsibilities and rights of parents. We should ask questions such as, "Does this effort include and facilitate parents as a unique part of the solution to social inclusion and the SDGs? What can be done to strengthen parents' capacities in their unique societal roles, responsibilities, and rights?" Family-oriented policies and best practices which support parents and help improve their skills, need to be evaluated and encouraged. Most parents do their best to love, protect, educate, and provide for their children. This unique resource of the fundamental and natural social group unit clearly is deserving of and entitled to recognition, protection and promotion by society and the State, as recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article16-3.

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Statement submitted by NGOs Computer Literacy Shelter Welfare, Rawalpindi Cantt., a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.

18-19499 (E) 191118

Please recycle

Statement

The NGOs Computer Literacy Shelter Welfare (NCLSW) provides awareness raising and capacity building in specifically selected area, where there is a high need and lack of satisfactory services. NCLSW's work focuses on:

- Women's empowerment, as promoted by the SDGs, including through informal education, overcoming illiteracy and innumeracy, and provision of vocational training in the fields of tailoring, sewing, embroidery, knitting and designing, kitchen gardening and maintaining poultry. Bringing women together also encourages social interaction, the development of self-confidence, and communication and cooperation skills.
- Developing linkages and coordinating with education, health, agriculture and vocational training institutions. Interactions with such institutions help in terms of enrolling women in specialized institutions after they acquire basic skills.
- NCLSW coordinates with national and international NGOs to raise awareness in the communities, help persons with disabilities and facilitate access to basic and specialized services. NCLSW coordinates with other organizations and facilitates distribution of walking aids and chairs to persons with disabilities.
- Awareness raising in the field of health, reproductive health including family planning and HIV/AIDS and human rights. NCLSW works to establish linkages with health institutions for early referral and reducing neonatal, infant, child and maternal mortality.
- NCLSW is working at community level through Citizens Community Board (CCB), Community Based Organizations (CBOs) and Village Development Committees (VDCs).
- Capacity building and training in humanistic, participatory philosophy of community development and women empowerment.

NCLSW Program:

1. Literate Pakistan Programme
2. Better Education for All (BEFA) Foundation Pakistan[e]
3. Social Mobilization and Community Organization
4. Gender development, women empowerment and skill building
5. Education Awareness and non-formal education
6. Health Care Promotion and Re-Productive Health

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Statement submitted by Sustainable Development for Vulnerable Peoples in Bangladesh, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

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Statement

Sustainable Development for Vulnerable People in Bangladesh (SDVPBD) is a leading NGO in Bangladesh, where it works to build the capacity of vulnerable peoples. Bangladesh is county that experiences overpopulation, but its economy is growing quickly and steadily. There is a need for skilled labour to maintain this progress. However, the majority of people in Bangladesh remain poor and therefore unable to invest money for their own capacity development. Without skills, jobs are not available. For this reason, foreigners are taking the most important jobs in Bangladesh. The Government is trying to overcome this gap, but it cannot do so all alone. Therefore, the support of civil society is very important.

SDVPBD provides capacity building training, free of charge, to vulnerable persons in Bangladesh. SDVPBD's main aim is to develop skills of 10 million people within five years. It seeks additional funding in order to execute this honorary undertaking.

SDVPBD requests others to join it in making its dream of a world free of poverty, where everybody's basic needs are met, a reality.

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Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly: Priority Theme: Addressing inequalities and challenges to social inclusion through fiscal, wage and social protection policies

Statement submitted by Istituto Internazionale Maria Ausiliatrice delle Salesiane di Don Bosco, International Volunteerism Organization for Women, Education and Development — VIDES, Istituto Internazionale Maria Ausiliatrice delle Salesiane di Don Bosco, non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.

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Statement

A. Introduction

1. This report is a joint submission by the International Volunteerism Organization for Women, Education and Development and Instituto Internazionale Maria Ausiliatrice, both non-governmental organizations in special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. Taking note of the significant progress made by Member States in improving the living conditions of their citizens and guaranteeing the exercise of their rights, we wish to focus on the issues affecting persons between 15 and 24 years of age (hereinafter referred to as youth) that prevent their full, effective and constructive participation in society.

2. Istituto Internazionale Maria Ausiliatrice is an organization that is dedicated to using education to prevent and solve the problems affecting children and youth in situations of vulnerability or risk. It is active in 95 countries in Europe, Asia, Africa, Oceania and the Americas.

3. International Volunteerism Organization for Women, Education and Development is an organization committed to protecting women, youth and children. Founded in 1987, it is now present in 41 countries across Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Americas, where it carries out volunteer-led educational projects at the local and international levels.

4. This joint submission welcomes the fact that the World Programme of Action for Youth is one of the programmes to be reviewed at the fifty-seventh session of the Commission for Social Development so that the 15 priority themes continue to be strengthened at the local, national and international levels.

B. Inequalities and challenges to the social inclusion of youth through fiscal, wage and social protection policies

According to the 2017 Revision of World Population Prospects prepared by the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, there are 513.8 million young people in the global labour force, of whom only 449 million are employed. In other words, there are 64.8 million young people in the world who are available to work and seeking employment, and yet the global economy is unable to generate enough jobs for them. The social and labour market challenges are clearly enormous given that the youth unemployment rate is 12.6 per cent, which is 7.1 points above the overall unemployment rate.

Although the causes of youth unemployment are many and varied, we would particularly like to highlight the following aspects:

1. Early withdrawal from the school system. These cases mainly relate to youth from low-income families whose entry into the labour market becomes an urgent necessity. If they find work, jobs tend to be poorly paid and lacking in social security benefits or any significant opportunities for professional growth.

2. Inflexible hiring practices. The abusive use of temporary contracts generates uncertainty and a lack of job security for youth, who bear the brunt of these unfair practices. We also find that the demand for highly qualified youth has increased considerably, mainly in high-income countries.

3. Local economies. It is difficult to create synergy and boost the growth of quality jobs within local economies.

4. Transition from the education system to the labour market. Within certain States, it has been difficult to adapt the education system to the rapidly changing job market.

The World Bank estimates that over the next 10 years, the global economy must create at least 600 million jobs just to maintain current employment levels. In this challenging environment, youth entrepreneurship can play an important role in facilitating economic development and job creation. Although young people often opt for self-employment because they are unable to find any other work, entrepreneurship can help them gain valuable skills, including critical thinking, decision-making skills, leadership, team spirit and innovation, all skills that will remain relevant throughout their lives.

Regrettably, however, 2017 global statistics from the International Labour Organization revealed that almost 1.4 billion workers remained in a situation of vulnera' le employment, meaning that workers lacked the benefits of decent work, including a fair income, adequate social security benefits for workers and their families, freedom of expression and equal opportunity, to mention just a few of those benefits.

Furthermore, labour market indicators show a great disparity between men and women. For example, the youth employment rate for men is 44.8 per cent, compared with 30.2 per cent for women, which represents a difference of 14.6 per cent.

Demographic statistics clearly show that this generation of youth is the largest in the history of the world and should therefore be able to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. However, the policies that each country adopts should address the aforementioned challenges. Only in this way can they influence the well-being and survival of future generations.

In this regard, we emphasize the need for youth participation and empowerment: young people have the fresh vision and skills to help Governments analyze problems and find solutions to promote and protect human rights, through the use of new strategies to face new challenges.

We underscore the need for appropriate management of tax policy, which can serve as the basis for a commitment between citizens and their Governments, especially youth.

Consequently, this coalition has the following recommendations for States:

For the most disadvantaged:

a. Guarantee basic standards of comprehensive social protection, paying particular attention to rural and indigenous communities.

b. Create tax collection systems that are fairer and better adapted to the specific nature of the local economy, to efficiently and sustainably raise the funds needed to provide quality basic goods and services.

For business:

a. Provide entrepreneurs with greater flexibility in the exercise of their entrepreneurial abilities and create tax incentives for those who employ young people, while complying with all legal requirements.

To strengthen the local economy:

a. Discourage the unconditional or unlimited payment of unemployment benefits and make additional efforts to improve job quality and ensure that growth gains are distributed equitably among labour force participants.

b. Develop policies and programmes with the capacity to harness the entrepreneurial potential of young people, paying particular attention to young women.

c. Improve access to financing for small and medium-sized enterprises, complementing it with the vocational and business training and financial services that young people need to become successful entrepreneurs.

In collaboration with the education system:

a. Encourage companies and educational institutions to work together to promote greater student participation in the world of work during the training period, combining teaching and learning processes in companies and training centres.

b. Develop mechanisms and practices that can help young people entering the labour market and/or companies hiring workers, and in general to help youth enter the labour market as self-employed or salaried workers.

c. Create an environment where training programmes involving companies and educational institutions are integrated with hiring.

d. Generate education policies that take into account the rapid development of technology-driven jobs and enable young people to be prepared for them.

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Priority theme: addressing inequalities and challenges to social inclusion through fiscal, wage and social protection policies

Statement submitted by the Association camerounaise pour la prise en charge de la personne âgée (ACAMAGE), a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.

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Statement

Addressing inequalities and challenges to social inclusion through fiscal, wage and social protection policies

Social inclusion means ensuring that people have the means to participate in the life and development of their community or society as valued and respected members thereof. This can only be done by redesigning such policies as those governing taxes, wages and social protection.

Fiscal policies, a powerful economic tool of the State, are the crucible of redistribution. Wages and other payments to State officials, subsidies allocated to the private sector and social protection policies are the main benefits of such redistribution.

The informal sector is a major beneficiary of redistribution

Together, fiscal, wage and social protection policies ensure that the entire population has the purchasing power needed to handle day-to-day issues.

That resolves, at least in part, problems related to inclusion, social inequality and poverty.

Specific social protections apply to vulnerable persons, in particular older men and women, who have reached retirement age if they worked in the formal sector.

Their wages at that point are replaced by an old-age pension equivalent to about a third of what they previously earned.

One of the social protections provided to older persons is health-care coverage, as they more often than not suffer from numerous health problems.

Such coverage ensures that older persons are not left behind but can continue, like anyone else, to form an integral part of society and participate actively in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

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Statement submitted by The HETL Association, Inc., a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

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Statement

Ensuring social inclusion and equity through universal access to higher education

The International Higher Education Teaching and Learning Association (HETL Association) advocates inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all. This report discusses key initiatives developed and led by the HETL Association to foster social inclusion and equity through universal access to quality higher education, such as higher education for a sustainable future, equity and inclusion in higher education, refugee education, and humanistic higher education.

Introduction, Objective, and Purpose

In addition to supporting the theme of the 57th Session of the Commission for Social Development, the HETL Association initiatives also aligns with the ongoing United Nation's programs, Education for All and the Sustainable Development Goals. In keeping with the theme of the 57th Session, the HETL Association has also addressed many of the issues associated with economic, social, and environmental development through higher education. The HETL Association supports research in these areas and has produced many publications to disseminate the findings of this research. The HETL Association has also created a global network of education scholars and leaders, which cultivates international understanding and cooperation among educators.

Goal 4 of the Sustainable Development Goals calls on higher education institutions to create inclusive and equitable education for all. Inclusion and equity are principles that should be an integral part of all educational policies, plans and practices. These principles need to be imbibed in everyday practices in educational institutions and should treat education at all levels as a human right. Universities are challenged to keep up with the ever-changing world and develop students' ability to think and act in ways that promote sustainability and inclusiveness.

The core purpose and objective of the HETL Association is to promote the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, especially Goal 4. The HETL Association does this by conducting cutting-edge research in this field and by creating a global network of education scholars and leaders that come together to create positive change in society and in education.

The HETL Association promotes integrating sustainable development into the curriculum, sustainability in leadership, and promotes university partnerships for sustainable development. To this end, the HETL Association has published many case studies and other empirical research that discusses international collaborations in sustainable development and related fields. For instance, the multi-volume set on sustainable development discusses different theoretical frameworks and models being utilized, the benefits gained, and the challenges encountered in this area.

Overview of Main Issues

The HETL Association provides a forum where scholars, through their research, develop guidelines towards building consensus for equity and inclusion in education. This includes the need for a shared understanding of the rationale for changes. The HETL Association, as a champion for this cause, is committed to working towards a more inclusive and equitable society. Through its various research and book projects, it is mobilizing opinion in favor of the principles of equity and inclusion. A well-functioning education system requires change makers like the HETL Association to

promote and communicate policies that focus on the participation and achievement of all people.

For instance, the refugee crisis is one of the biggest disasters in human civilization. The HETL Association aims to give voice to the common needs, concerns, and aspirations of the refugee population through its three volume series on refugee education by creating a global dialogue, cutting-edge academic research, and sharing of best refugee practices undertaken by educators and non-governmental organizations. The HETL Association aims to provide recognition to those who are working towards imparting education to refugee people and giving them the tools they need to help recover from the effects of conflict and displacement. The world has seen an unprecedented surge of refugees around the world. In their struggle for survival the need for education is a top priority.

In addition, a number of different initiatives have been initiated in universities throughout the world within the last decade, which consider sustainable development as an important issue of higher education. Research is being conducted to adopt sustainability in the form of new study programs that have sustainable development as their area of study. The HETL Association's multi-volume series highlights those strategies and programs that have been implemented by higher education institutions to help integrate sustainability into the curriculum and beyond.

To that end, the series will touch upon and examine related and overlapping issues such as ecological footprints, universities' sustainability performance, campus practices, student led initiatives, partnership with other institutions, sustainability leadership and strategies, sustainability indicators and sustainability literacy. The HETL Association will address the relevant issues at the theory, policy, and practice levels and consider how educational institutions can be transformed through increased attention to making basic and higher education more sustainable in nature.

The HETL Association has also adopted a much-ignored cultural lens of indigenous education and its impact on higher education. It traces the historical trajectory of higher education development resulting from indigenous ways of thinking and acting. The challenges of such interactions in higher education will be discussed by academicians who argue that infusion of indigenous values in higher education will create a strong impact in the areas of teaching, learning and research.

Accomplishments and Challenges

To achieve the aforementioned goals, HETL works in four key areas: networking, conferences, research, and publishing.

Networking: The HETL Association has built one of the world's largest networks of higher education professionals. To date, the HETL Association global network consists of over 100,000 leaders and scholars in the field of education. The HETL Association uses several different communication platforms to connect educators for free, including social media and other web-based platforms.

Conferences: The HETL Association convenes an annual conference that brings together educators from around the world to dialogue on ways to improve higher education and to make it work for all people in all countries. One of our main focus areas is social development and social inclusion.

Research: The HETL Association conducts cutting-edge research in the areas of social development and social inclusion. A few examples of the research that has been done recently includes: 1) refugee education; 2) inclusive and multicultural higher education; 3) sustainability in higher education; 4) indigenizing higher education and 5) humanistic higher education.

Publishing: The HETL Association disseminates its research findings to the world through strategic partnerships with leading academic publishers and educational news outlets. The ultimate goal is to deliver the research results of into the hands of all educators and the public, in order to drive policy change and meaningful decision-making. Within the last three years, HETL has published over a dozen academic books, over a dozen news articles and policy briefs, and over two hundred research articles in academic journals.

Expectations and Recommendations

Research and advocacy efforts on refugee situations has shown that access to education is not universally guaranteed, especially for children having irregular or undefined status. Refugee children are often denied access to education. This educational gap in will have a significant impact and implications for the children's futures, including in relation to employment and earnings. Early childhood educational programs, whether home- or school-based, have proven essential compensatory educational tools for children having refugee or migrant status.

The HETL Association's research has revealed that grass root campaigns are working towards achieving participation and full involvement of disadvantaged groups towards equitable distribution of educational opportunities. The case studies and empirical research highlighted in the volume series emphasizes effective cooperation and coordination towards multisectoral responses that recognizes the social and economic dimensions of inclusion.

Through its research work in social and educational inclusion and equity, the HETL Association has established a coherent understanding of the current movement, and consequent reforms, for cultivating and promoting a more diverse and equitable educational environment. For the future, the HETL Association will focus on the development of human capacity at all levels (individual, local, national, and international) for a more equitable and inclusive world for all.

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Statement submitted by Sahkar Social Welfare Association, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

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Please recycle

Statement

Women in Pakistan; Gender Gap and Honour killings

Riaz Hussain Chandio

Pakistan is a developing country and came into being on in 1947 as a new Muslim state, but civilization first developed in the Indus river valley around 3,000 BC (before Christ) in present Pakistan. The population of Pakistan is about 190 million and more than half part of its people live in rural and backward areas. Pakistan has two genres of laws: sharia and civil law. The constitution of the country categorizes equality between women and men, but despite that setback, in Sindh, there are spreading the honour crimes, dowry system, marriages of women with holy Book, child marriages and forced marriages still remain, sale and purchase of a woman and the giving of girls or women to marry as a form of compensation to the victim's family. In rural areas of Sindh, people mostly purchase a woman through marriage to use her for sowing and harvesting of agriculture and rearing of livestock. There are several strict and brutal societal rites in Pakistan which not only taint the name of humankind but also are against the teaching of Islam, where the religion prohibits the likes of these actions. Furthermore, behind these treacherous acts different offenses have also been commonly committed, such as acid throwing on the faces of women. In fact, the woman could not get a position which should have to be owned by her. According to database of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan there were 987 cases of honour killings with 1096 females and 88 males of whom at least 170 were minors. The above cases reported by HRCP which have observed through various forms of their sources while unreported cases were silent alarming than above figure.

Honour killing

There are a couple words of "honour killing" (Karo Kari) means homicide of a woman and or a man, if any girl or woman caught or labelled with any male in objectionable position, then she (kari) and her co-accused (karo) will be killed by her family or community. Even a woman can prove that she is a victim of rape cases, ultimately, she may be killed by her family in the name of honour and they are proud of what they did. Honour killing is a tough tradition in a tribal antiquated community that is experienced for centuries. According to the historians they claim that honour killing tradition in Pakistan originated with many Baloch tribes of Balochistan and spread to other communities as they migrated to different parts of the Pakistan in the 17th century while Arab progenies migrated to settle in Balochistan. The Sindhi nation has adopted honour killings from a culture of Baloch tribes. As per the report of UNPF, all around the world about 5000 women and girls are killed annually in honour killings and out of the figure approximately, 1000 women are killed in Pakistan per year. It shows clearly that 20 percent of the total figure of honour killings occurs in Pakistan.

Women rights in Islam

Prior to Islam, women were extremely worsened and deprived of their rights and independence by the society and treating women as second-class citizens. Quran and Hadiths declared the respect and honour of women in the religion. The Quran says; "And for women are rights over men, similar to those of men over women." (Qur'an 2:228). Holy prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) said, "Among you the most respectable is the one who respects women and the most disrespectable is the one who disrespect the women."

Gender Gap in Sindh

Sindh province has rich resources, but still stands with a high rate of unemployment, maternal mortality, female illiteracy and gender inequality. According to recent annual gender gap report by World Economic Forum (WEF), Pakistan ranked 144 out of 145, second last in world gender equality. Although, women of Pakistan have earned Oscar awards and Nobel Prizes, unfortunately, the country's rank is increasing towards the bottom of the gender gap Index.

Education in rural areas of Sindh

Illiteracy contributes to the increase of the honour crimes and gender inequality. Approximately half population of the male is illiterate, and two thirds of the female population cannot write even their names, especially who are living in rural areas is upsetting. Among the world, Pakistan is listed as one of the lowest literacy rates, as per data of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), which reported that Pakistan is listed at 160th in all countries of the world. There is an alarming situation in Pakistan's rural areas, especially in rural of Sindh where the female literacy rate is between 5 to 15 percent and in various areas the education of girls is banned by their family on cultural and religious grounds. I also belong to rural area of Sindh, I observed that the heinous practice occurs to thrash a woman, home imprisonment, strict and covered dress code, restriction of education or a job in rural Sindh. They considered themselves as respectable to adopt these acts in the society. I also observed that in rural Sindh mostly old-age persons are marrying teenage girls, in-fact, they don't trust owing to unmatched relationship and usually they are very suspicious of their young wives and torture them to keep the control.

Faislos and Jirgas System (Informal Justice system)

Most cases of honour crimes are jointly settled between complainants and respondents in the courts and or in Faislos/Jirgas. Hereafter, a Faislo or Jirga is fixed up through reps of both groups and led by the local tribal chief, Wadera or Sardar then a man or boy who has been proved a guilty in the case has to pay compensation for his life to be secure. While the complainants commonly relatives of the victims, they excuse the respondent due to compensation and force of their relatives, Wadera and Sardar (Landlord).

Furthermore, the major cause of female victims to avoid for reporting their incidents is the ill-mannered attitude by the police, lawyers and prosecutors who would ask shameful interrogations and clear details during the prosecutions usually held in open trials. In the other hand, pressure and attitude of the community are also one of the few reasons to sidestep the cases to report.

Conclusion

The statement concludes that Honour killing remains an unsettled matter as the current rules and their implementation have been unsuccessful to stop the crime that continues still without any fear, in this situation, there is difficult for women to receive justice owing to the existing system of Law and Tribes. Faisla and Jarga system (non-formal justice system) permits local leaders to create decisions based on their knowledge and local trend and traditions. In the other hand, the concepts of honour (gairat) and aboriginal council system (wadera and sardari nizam) often hushes victims of the crimes. The world has to keep an eye on the said system.

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Statement submitted by World Union of Small and Medium Enterprises, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.

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Please recycle

Statement

An Innovative Approach for the financing of social protection policies, particularly of farmer- and crafts- families in less privileged economies.

Introduction, objective and purpose of the statement

There are an estimated 450 million smallholder farming households (representing 2 billion people) relying to various degrees on agricultural production for their livelihoods. They represent the largest client segment by livelihood of those living on less than $2 a day, though they significantly contribute to the well-being of the society.

Safeguarding the rights, interests, and competitiveness of Small and Medium Enterprises, including crafts and farms, is paramount for sustainable economic and social development and for the eradication of poverty, particularly of families running small farms and smaller enterprises in less developed countries. Additional funds are urgently needed for the financing of supporting programs. Our recommendations herein would decisively contribute to feasible solutions and the same time optimize government spending of taxes and limit government debt policy.

National Foundations for Economic Development and Crises Prevention (ECOFOUND)

We recommend that Civil Society Organizations safeguarding the rights, interests, and competitiveness of Smaller Enterprises and who enjoy Special Consultative Status at United Nations Economic and Social Council — ECOSOC) shall start with the registration of ECOFOUNDS as legal entities. Members shall be all persons who are obliged to collecting the VAT or comparable taxes for the Governments.

Basic sustainable financing of ECOFOUNDS shall be small parts of tax revenues (VAT, Finance Transaction Tax, Currency Transaction Tax). In order to achieve political acceptance, it is conditional to prove that such tax revenues are been allocated in accordance with tax optimization criteria, e.g. Pareto optimality. ECOFOUNDS shall be governed by SME Supporting National Organizations, e.g. Chambers of Commerce and other Entrepreneur- and International Associations. These foundations need a sustainable annual income for providing efficient services for the beneficiaries. Sources will be identified in a minimum percentage of the VAT collected by a Member Country, Funds of European Union Programmes (e.g. COSME, HORIZON), the IFC — International Finance Corporation, other Entrepreneur Organizations, and Charity Foundations.

Organizational Structure of ECOFOUNDS

ECOFOUNDS are entitled to manage the resources collected and distribute them in order to reach their ultimate purpose of providing support to SMEs and projects particularly related to farmer- and crafts- families. Based on legislation of the Member Country, ECOFOUNDS shall have the following main bodies: General Assembly (Members shall be Delegates of Chambers of Commerce, NGOs that have VAT paying members, and Consumer Organizations); Board of Directors to be appointed by the General Assembly; Chief Executives, appointed by the Board of Directors; and Control Board, appointed by the Government.

Closing Sentence

ECOFOUNDS are expected to have a significant impact in fostering the organic development of smaller and family-oriented businesses and protecting the small entrepreneurs and craftsmen who need most to advance in their activities, thus providing employment and employment opportunities.

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Statement submitted by Afectividad y Sexualidad, Asociación Civil, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.

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Statement

Inclusion of aspects of violence prevention in social protection programmes to achieve the 2030 agenda

Afectividad y Sexualidad (Affectivity and Sexuality) is a civil association established on 19 October 2001 by a group of professionals interested in promoting human development through emotional and sexual maturity. Our mission is to offer educational models that promote a culture of respectful treatment by applying psychoemotional skills, with the goal of the emotional and sexual development of our beneficiaries to enable them to have full interpersonal relations and improve their quality of life. Our team, comprised of clinical and educational psychologists, educators and specialists in family sciences, works in conjunction with various actors in the educational and cultural sectors to prevent the mistreatment and sexual abuse of children.

As part of the Sustainable Development Goals, in 2015 world leaders made a commitment to end all forms of violence against children by the year 2030. In July 2016, Mexico was one of the first four countries in the world to join the Global Partnership to End Violence against Children. The commitment requires the collaboration and cooperation of such actors as the different branches and tiers of Government, organized civil society, academia, the private sector, religious associations and the media.

Mexico's plan of action under the Global Partnership to End Violence against Children lays the foundation for intersectoral linkage and collaboration among various social actors, government agencies, civil society organizations, academia and international organizations, and coordination with the different tiers of Government in the application and follow-up of actions that will be taken, also including in the strategy various social protection programmes such as PROSPERA.

Just as a front has been forged with multiple actors to eliminate violence against children, individual efforts must be made under the umbrella of social inclusion programmes that include from the moment of their design mechanisms that help to prevent the different forms of violence against children starting with early childhood.

It has been shown in various studies that investment in early childhood and preventive approaches is more economically viable than addressing numerous social problems (James J. Heckman, 2008). Therefore, it is essential that social inclusion programmes target the first 1,000 days of human life. Many countries already have programmes that operate in this way but many programmes are geared towards meeting the economic needs of families or ensuring access for families to public health services. In the case of children, social protection programmes are aimed at improving nutrition to ensure proper development and improving and maintaining good physical health, leaving to one side the emotional and psychological health that plays a large and indeed essential role in their development.

The emotional health of children must be supported by establishing the conditions in which they can live in a family environment of protection, free from violence, as envisaged in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. To that end, their basic needs must be met and efforts undertaken so that they do not grow up in poverty. However, it is also necessary to contribute directly to the elimination and prevention of violence in all its forms.

of transgenerational and systemic child-rearing methods, violence remains the only alternative to educate children, it being the way in which fathers and caregivers were

educated. At the same time, the population is unaware of the effects of violence on development, such as poor neurological, cognitive, interpersonal, behavioural and socio-emotional development.

Children who experience situations of violence are more likely to engage in violent behaviours towards other children and adults and show less empathy towards others, causing a range of social problems. The effect is greater in populations that face marginalization, inequality and poverty.

Society's perception of violence does not correspond directly to the reality of the problem. According to the 2016 study on the perception of child sex abuse in Mexico, conducted by Afectividad y Sexualidad, A.C.; Lexia Insights & Solutions; and Netquest, 50 per cent of Mexicans believe that the main perpetrators of violence against children are strangers, when in fact in about 80 per cent of cases they are family members or otherwise close to the children. At the same time, the residence seen as a home and as a family today is considered a safe place despite the fact that it is the environment where violence is learned.

According to the 2018 study on children, adolescents and their families, carried out by Afectividad y Sexualidad, A.C.; Lexia Insights & Solutions; and Netquest, within the home, in the family, the mother represents the most important point of reference where trust is concerned; the person with whom there is the most open dialogue, which is mostly associated with the support she provides and is strongly linked to the duration and frequency of time spent together. On the other hand, the father figure is one of the family members with whom children spend the least time; his image is not strongly associated with affection as in the case of the mother and he is the person who is least involved in children's activities.

Social protection programmes are necessary to consolidate the environment in which children and adolescents develop. That environment is the home which, if tarnished by poor access to services, inequalities and poverty, influences the development of children.

Social protection and inclusion programmes must provide mechanisms to enable primary caregivers to spend time with their families and to encourage participation by father figures in child-rearing to foster the creation of better emotional ties and the development of psychoemotional skills, leading to lower rates of violence and social problems.

Social protection systems and policies must be focused on mothers but they should also encourage fathers to participate more directly in the education of their children and ensure that they have the resources and necessary time to share experiences with them.

Child-rearing through positive parenting by getting mothers and fathers involved will lead to fewer social problems in the future. Therefore, investments must be made in nutritional and health programmes that protect children from early childhood but also in ensuring that parents have the necessary resources to guarantee their full development.

In the specific case of sexual violence against children, it has been proven that if it is not dealt with early on it will have repercussions for their lives as adults. As a result, the best alternative is to invest in prevention instead of trying to address and correct social problems.

awareness of the value of positive parenting styles and the development of skills with

children as the centre, guaranteeing their fundamental rights and promoting their well-being.

As is internationally agreed, social protection is key to achieving the 2030 agenda. The eradication of poverty is the determining factor in the Millennium Development Goals and that is especially so in areas related directly to the culture of peace and the development of children. Accordingly, strategies, policies and programmes must be established that can address the system in a holistic manner.

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Statement submitted by C-Fam, Inc., a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.

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Statement

The family is the most important and only source of social protection for over half of the world's population, but the international community has shown itself unable to focus on the family in international policy. As a consequence, international programming continues to neglect the family. This must change if the international community is serious about addressing social protection in a meaningful way.

According to the International Labor Organization, only twenty-nine percent of the global population enjoys comprehensive social security. That leaves over seventy percent of the world's population with either an inadequate patchwork of social security protections or no public social assistance at all. For these more than 5 billion people, the family is the principal or sole social protection system. It is their only education fund, their only unemployment safety net, and their only health fund.

In developing countries where social protection lags, policies and programmes should support the family in order to boost its already important protective role as social safety net and capture the economic synergies the family alone can deliver. Unfortunately, international agencies have failed to address the family unit as the beneficiary of their policies. International policies instead usually target individuals, in the hope that families too will benefit. This is a mistake. In a context where the family is the only vehicle of social protection, it is counterproductive to focus on individuals without regard for their families.

Unless national and international policies begin to address the family unit as the subject, vehicle, and principal beneficiary of social protection, investments in social protection will be diluted, and may even contribute to dispersing social protection efforts by weakening the family unit. To continue with business as usual would be ineffective and wasteful. It would also be a violation of human rights standards.

International law entitles the family to protection. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and binding international instruments reserve singular protections for the family in recognition of the family's irreplaceable role as "natural environment for the growth and well-being of all its members and particularly children".

Article 16 Universal Declaration of Human Rights defines the family as "the natural and fundamental group unit of society" and declares that it is "entitled to protection by society and the State". Article 23 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), and article 10 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the Preamble of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), and the Preamble of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) include this same language verbatim.

By virtue of these provisions in international law, the family is a proper subject of human rights and is a bearer of rights in international human rights law.

The outcomes of landmark United Nations conferences have recognized as much. The Programme of Action of the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development, for example, referred to the "rights of families". Similarly, the Programme of Action of the 1995 World Summit for Social Development recognized that the family is "entitled to receive comprehensive protection and support".

The goal of social protection is perfectly consistent with underlying justification for the singular protections to which the family is entitled in international law. It is best expressed in the Preamble of the CRC, which affirms how "the family, as the fundamental group of society and the natural environment for the growth and well-

protection and assistance so that it can fully assume its responsibilities within the community".

It must be noted that, when it comes to social protection, states have a heightened obligation to pay special attention to the family and do everything possible to assist families. The ICCPR established the obligation of state parties to that convention to provide the "widest possible protection and assistance to the family," and that the right to an adequate standard of living extends not only to individuals but to individuals "and their families". The Covenant, in this sense, does not merely "entitle" the family to generic social and economic protection and assistance, like other international human rights treaties, but requires states to provide the family with the "widest possible" protection and assistance.

The protections states are bound to provide the family cannot be limited to social and economic protections. In fact, other core obligations of states toward the family are even more elemental; they concern the nature of the family, family unity and stability, the equal rights of men and women, the rights of the child, and relations formed through family bonds more generally. While these core obligations of states towards the family may not be directly a form of social protection, they also have a protective role.

First and foremost is the definitional obligation of what constitutes a family. This is no small question in the context of social protection because, if the family is entitled to protection by society and the state, as international law says, it is paramount to define what exactly constitutes a family for purposes of this binding international obligation to provide the family with social protection or other entitlements. In this regard, international law is unambiguous.

International law establishes that the family is formed when a man and a woman exercise their right to freely "marry and found a family". States may extend social protections to other types of bonds between individuals, such as friendships, the formation of households, or even sentimental attachments between persons of the same sex. But only the family is "entitled" by international law to protection by society and the state. In this sense, the family is unique, no doubt because of its role and status as "natural and fundamental group unit of society".

Other core obligations concerning the nature and character of the family include: the protection of the equal rights of men and women to freely enter into marriage and found a family, and their equal rights during marriage and at its dissolution, the obligation to create an environment conducive to family formation and stability, the protection of the right of the child to know and be cared for by her/his parents, the related rights of the child to a cultural and religious identity, and the "prior" right of parents to educate their children in accordance with their convictions. It should also be acknowledged that the care of the most vulnerable in every society — the young, the elderly, and persons with disabilities — is often provided within the context of the family or obtained through the advocacy of their family members.

These obligations are becoming especially relevant in contexts where robust social protection has already been achieved. As governments take up more and more social protection functions once undertaken by the family, the very nature and purpose of the family is increasingly called into question. Many nations have adopted laws that make it so easy to divorce that it undermines the very nature of the family and its social importance. Some nations have redefined the family to include relations

individuals in same-sex relations.

The recent pressure to grant international status and recognition to social and legal arrangements between individuals of the same sex in the context of the United Nations has led to confusion and acrimony in international negotiations on the subject of the family. It is widely credited with leading to the exclusion of the family altogether from international policies agreed in recent years.

It is hoped that as the international community turns to the issue of social protection, these unfortunate debates can be put aside in order to concentrate on finding solutions to deliver social protection to the greatest number of people in an effective and empowering way. This can never happen for over 5 billion people who rely solely on or almost entirely on the family as their only social protection unless governments and the international community begin to look to the family as the subject and target of social protection policies and programmes.